



#AFRICA4HER 2018

SUPPORTING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS TOOLKIT

PLAN AND HOLD A #YALILEARNS EVENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Ensuring women entrepreneurs are supported and empowered is critical for ensuring security in local, national, and the global economies. Women in the workforce face a variety of challenges, from breaking into markets, finding support in the workplace, and establishing themselves as leaders.

This toolkit will assist you in planning an #Africa4Her event that helps others learn about the importance of supporting women entrepreneurs. It will also help you define the specifics of your event, plan your event, and provide tips on how to engage with your community before and after the event. It is recommended that you read through the toolkit in its entirety so that you have a good idea of the process, and then work through it section by section as you plan your event.

This toolkit is intended for use by individuals, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), school clubs, houses of worship, or businesses who are organizing an #Africa4Her event.

REMEMBER!

The YALI Network Online Course Community Organizing for Action (yali.state.gov/courses/community-org/) provides a great introduction to community engagement. Be sure to complete the course before you begin planning your #Africa4Her event.

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STEP 1: PREPARE THE EVENT

Before you begin planning your #Africa4Her event, make sure you watch “[Paving the Way for Women Entrepreneurs](#),” Lesson 2 from the YALI Network Online Course *Understanding the Rights of Women and Girls* in order to familiarize yourself with the material.

The goal of your event should be to inform your audience about the need to support women entrepreneurs and women in the workforce.

Two main points to focus on when thinking about your event are the bias constraints the women face when starting a new business and strategies that individuals can adopt to address stereotypes, discrimination, and biases that prevent women from succeeding and thriving in business.

There are three major pillars to focus on when thinking about your event: the message, the messenger, and the audience.

The **message** of your presentation needs to be timely and relevant to your community. It should be clear, credible, and have a concise call to action — something you want your audience to do as a result of learning this information. As the **messenger**, you too need to be credible and trustworthy, use appropriate language and have a strong background of knowledge on the topic — if you don’t then you should find a collaborator who does. Your **audience** should feel like the issue you’re discussing directly impacts them and the community, and that they are partners in addressing the issue.

Think about these steps when working through your planning.

☐ **DEFINE THE NEED:**

You know your community; what are the issues you see affecting those around you? Identify the business leaders, experts, and advocates in the community and connect with them to better understand the needs. Here are some topics to consider when planning your event:

- ☐ How to identify gender-based bias and discrimination
- ☐ Strategies for women to establish and develop themselves as entrepreneurs
- ☐ The importance of and roles of men and women to promote equal opportunity
- ☐ Other: _____

STEP 1: PREPARE THE EVENT

☐ CREATE A MISSION STATEMENT:

Include the need you plan to address, the issue(s) you plan to talk about, and who will benefit. *Example: At my #Africa4Her event, I want to tell my audience about the importance of equal opportunity and the roles of men and women to promote it.*

☐ Mission:

☐ SET A GOAL FOR YOUR EVENT:

Think about things like how many people you want to attend, what you want them to take away from the event, and any measurable action steps you want those who attend to take after the event.

☐ What is the specific goal of your event?

☐ What action steps can people take after your event?

☐ OPTIONAL:

Identify potential collaborators: If you have time, do your research and learn whether there are others in your area working toward the same goals you are. If there are other individuals, such as women business leaders or advocates, or groups who are experts on the subject matter, they might be interested in providing more information to your audience during your event.

☐ Are you already involved with a community service group that might be able to support the event?

☐ Yes

Name of group

Contact information

☐ No

WOULD YOU LIKE TO COLLABORATE WITH ANOTHER INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TO PLAN THE EVENT? IF SO, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

☐ RESEARCH POTENTIAL COLLABORATORS:

Try to select an individual or group who has an expertise or existing interest in the topic your event will be covering.

☐ USE YOUR NETWORK:

See if you have any connections who can introduce you to the individual or group, as you're more likely to be successful if there is a personal connection. If the person or group is interested in working with you, set a time for a planning meeting and complete the remaining steps together:

☐ Name _____

☐ Contact information

☐ Date/time of planning meeting

STEP 1: PREPARE THE EVENT

□ CREATE YOUR EVENT OUTLINE:

Once you've watched the course lesson and thought about your event, you'll need to create your event plan. It should include time to deliver the desired information to your audience, a group activity, and time for discussion and answering questions. Use the facilitation guide on page 12 to help create your event plan.

TO PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- To ensure that you can help encourage conversation, it is a good idea to spend some time with the [discussion questions \[PDF\]](#) yourself and come up with some possible answers.
- If English might be a challenge for your participants, you can print out the [French lesson transcript](#) for participants in advance.

FURTHER READING

Learn more about setting goals, so that your #Africa4Her event aligns with your own long-term vision: yali.state.gov/settingandachievinggoals/

Learn more about facilitating a #YALILearns course: yali.state.gov/to-host-a-yalilearns-event-you-dont-need-to-be-an-expert/

STEP 2: PLAN THE LOGISTICS

Figuring out the logistics is where you really get into planning the specifics of your event. You'll want to think about things such as where and when you'll hold your event and whether there are any resources you need to hold the event.

☐ SELECT A VENUE:

The type of event you are holding will determine the best place to conduct it. Because you'll be facilitating a course lesson, you may need the space and ability to project from your computer, as well as an area where you can seat all of your attendees so that they can hear the presentation. You may have options such as a local school, library, or community center. Your workplace or another local business also might have space you can use.

Where will you hold your event?

- ☐ School
- ☐ Workplace
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Community center
- ☐ Place of worship
- ☐ Other _____

☐ CONFIRM THE DATE:

When do you plan to hold your event? Make sure you confirm the date with your venue.

- ☐ When will you hold your event?

- ☐ If your event will be held outside, what is your rain date (alternate date)?

☐ SET THE TIME OF THE EVENT:

Your #Africa4Her event should last approximately two hours. This should include time for your presentation, group activities, and questions and discussion. You should think about when your attendees will be available. Do you need to accommodate work or school schedules? Doing so may limit the amount of time available for the event.

☐ Time of event: _____ to _____

☐ IDENTIFY RESOURCE NEEDS:

Think about the supplies and other resources you'll need for your event. What resources do you need for your event? These might include:

- ☐ Computer
- ☐ Projector
- ☐ Internet access
- ☐ Microphone and speaker(s)
- ☐ Information flyers, publications, or printed transcripts
- ☐ Signs or banners
- ☐ Seating
- ☐ Tables
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Other: _____

STEP 2: PLAN THE LOGISTICS

FURTHER READING

Find resources for planning a #YALILearns event: yali.state.gov/learns/

Learn tips for planning a #YALILearns event, which are applicable to other types of #YALIServes events as well: yali.state.gov/a-step-by-step-planning-guide-on-hosting-a-yalilearns-event/

Learn about recruiting a celebrity to participate in your event: share america.gov/how-to-attract-celebrity-to-your-cause/

STEP 3: PROMOTE THE EVENT

You should identify the audience in your community that you think would benefit the most from the information you'll be sharing. This could be an age demographic, a gender, a tribe, or something else.

ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT/INFORM THE COMMUNITY

To bring in the members of the community you hope to help or inform with your event, you'll want to help get the word out about your event to make sure those that you hope to have attend are aware of the event and know how to get involved. Think about who would gain the most from the information you plan to share and who is most affected by the issue you're planning to talk about, and think how to reach them.

IS THERE A SPECIFIC DEMOGRAPHIC THAT YOU WANT TO ATTEND YOUR EVENT?

- ☐ Women
- ☐ Men
- ☐ Students
- ☐ Specific age range: _____
- ☐ Speakers of a specific language: _____
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ No specific demographic—everyone is welcome

WHERE IS THE BEST PLACE TO ADVERTISE THE EVENT TO REACH THAT GROUP?

- ☐ Schools/universities
- ☐ Houses of worship
- ☐ Community centers
- ☐ Social media networks
- ☐ Resident associations
- ☐ Local businesses
- ☐ Other: _____

WHAT IS THE BEST ADVERTISING MATERIAL FOR YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHIC?

- ☐ Flyers
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Social media posts
- ☐ Face-to-face presentation
- ☐ Other: _____

DO PARTICIPANTS NEED TO REGISTER IN ADVANCE TO ATTEND THE EVENT?

- ☐ Yes (Be sure your promotional materials include information about how to register!)
- ☐ No

STEP 3: PROMOTE THE EVENT

REMEMBER!

If you want people to register in advance, be sure to send them a reminder notification (via email, WhatsApp, social media, etc.) a few days before the event.

FURTHER READING

Learn tips for planning an event that volunteers will enjoy:
share.america.gov/it-takes-grit-to-help-volunteers-have-fun/

Learn some of the benefits of volunteering, which you can use in your messaging to potential volunteers:
share.america.gov/4-ways-volunteering-benefits-you/

Learn about getting people to participate in your efforts:
share.america.gov/5-tips-for-building-successful-campaign/

STEP 4: HOLD THE EVENT

After preparing for and planning your event, it's finally here! All your hard work will pay off as you share your message. The following prompts will help you ensure the event goes smoothly and that not only do you achieve your goals, but that participants have a great time as well.

1-2 DAYS IN ADVANCE

☐ **DOUBLE-CHECK YOUR TO-DO LIST:**

Do a final check to make sure you've completed all the planning steps. Confirm with your venue that you have the space reserved and any equipment you may need.

☐ **GO OVER YOUR PRESENTATION:**

If you have notecards, make sure they're in order, and check that you'll be able to access your presentation either on your computer, through an email, or on a flash drive.

☐ **SEND REMINDERS:**

Use Facebook, WhatsApp, email, etc. to remind your participants, community, and volunteers, about your event one to two days in advance.

DAY OF THE EVENT

☐ **ENJOY!**

You've put a lot of work into planning the event, and now is the time to see that hard work pay off. Enjoy sharing your knowledge with your attendees, interacting with members of your community, and making an impact by supporting and empowering women entrepreneurs!

☐ **SHOWCASE THE WORK YOU ARE DOING:**

Be sure to document the event, particularly by taking photos. Time permitting, you can share your event on social media as it is happening, or share photos afterwards. If you have established any media contacts, see if they can stop by the event to share it with a wider audience. You can share your photos and videos along with a short summary of how the event went at yali.state.gov/eventreport (your event might be featured by the YALI Network).

☐ **GET FEEDBACK:**

Have participants complete a short survey or feedback form after the event, but before they go home. It may be harder to get this information from them after they have left the event. Their feedback will help you improve when you plan future events. You can ask questions such as:

- ☐ Did you feel the information from the presentation, the group activities, and the discussion were valuable? Why or why not?
- ☐ Did you feel the event was well organized? Why or why not?
- ☐ What was your favorite part of the event? Why?
- ☐ How would you improve the event?

STEP 4: HOLD THE EVENT

FURTHER READING

Learn tips for making sure your event runs flawlessly:

yali.state.gov/6-lessons-i-learned-organizing-a-yali-network-event/

STEP 5: FOLLOW UP AFTER THE EVENT

Measuring and evaluating the success of your event will give you crucial data on how well your plans met your goals and if you made a difference in your community.

The participants who were involved in your event can form a great foundation for future events, and most importantly they can become advocates for women entrepreneurs using the information they learn from your event. Be sure to keep in touch with them! Consider the following prompts to think through how you can continue your community engagement beyond one day.

If you worked with any other individuals or groups in your community, think about ways to continue those relationships and how you can continue to be involved in supporting women entrepreneurs in your community.

ASSESS YOUR LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT:

Do you want to start planning women's entrepreneurship events on a regular basis? Or would you prefer to hold additional events as you have extra time? Would you rather not commit to additional events, but perhaps instead share information with others via channels such as email or social media?

WHAT LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT FEELS RIGHT TO YOU?

- ☐ I would like to hold more events — on a weekly, monthly, or semi-annual basis!
- ☐ I might plan another event in the future, but I'm not sure how often.
- ☐ I will stay in contact with my participants, but mainly by sharing information.
- ☐ Other: _____

(IF APPLICABLE) EVALUATE COLLABORATOR NEEDS:

Once you have a sense of what engagement efforts you would like to undertake long-term, think about how your collaborators and anyone you worked with might be able to assist in empowering women entrepreneurs.

WHAT COULD VOLUNTEERS STAY INVOLVED WITH?

- ☐ Forming a community group that meets periodically
- ☐ Participating in future events
- ☐ Recruiting additional participants
- ☐ Planning their own events
- ☐ Other: _____

(IF APPLICABLE) CONTACT COLLABORATORS:

Within a few days of the event, be sure to contact collaborators to thank them again for their involvement. This is a great time to share success metrics, such as the number of people who received information from the event. It's also a great opportunity to lay the foundation for ongoing communication. Let them know what your plans are for future activities, and ask them to let you know if they would like to stay involved.

STEP 5: FOLLOW UP AFTER THE EVENT

ESTABLISH A COMMUNICATION CHANNEL:

Once you know which of your volunteers and collaborators would like to be involved in future activities, think about the best way to stay in contact with them. For example, you may want to start a WhatsApp group, create an email list, or start a Facebook group.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO STAY IN TOUCH?

- ☐ WhatsApp group
- ☐ Facebook group
- ☐ Email list
- ☐ Announcements at community events
- ☐ Community message board
- ☐ Other: _____

DON'T FORGET!

You now have a great resource at your disposal — a group of active participants who are interested in contributing to future community engagement efforts! Be sure to stay in touch with them, and make the most of this great opportunity to continue making a difference in your community.

#AFRICA4HER 2018 FACILITATION GUIDE

This facilitation guide provides you with a plan for facilitating “Paving the Way for Women Entrepreneurs” (lesson 2) from the YALI Network Online Course *Understanding the Rights of Women and Girls*.

Before you begin, work through the #Africa4Her toolkit located at yali.state.gov/4her. The toolkit provides step by step instructions for planning and hosting a #Africa4Her event in your community.

INTRODUCE YOURSELF (2 MINUTES)

Introduce yourself as a YALI Network member who wants to start an important conversation about female entrepreneurship. You can explain why you are interested in this subject, what you hope to accomplish, or some background information about yourself. But remember to keep it short!

EXPLAIN THE STRUCTURE OF THE EVENT (3 MINUTES)

Give participants your agenda to follow for the session. Walk them through what to expect, including interactive activities, and outcomes. Don't forget to explain all directions and activities fully and clearly before you begin.

ICE BREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Ice breakers are short, group activities that help participants get to know each other and feel more comfortable having conversations. There is a suggested icebreaker included here, but you can come up with your own.

Just be careful - icebreakers can take a long time, so make sure you're keeping an eye on how much time you've given the groups. [For more ice breakers, visit icebreakers.ws]

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY:

Similarities - Break the participants up into groups of 3-5, depending on the event size. Ask the participants to find 6 things that all group members have in common (i.e. hobbies, where they are from, number of siblings, work that they are passionate about, etc.) Have each group appoint a spokesperson to present those 6 similarities to the whole group. See how many items the whole group has in common!

GROUP ACTIVITY: BRAINSTORM (10 MINUTES)

GOAL: CHALLENGE GROUP TO NAME 10 OBSTACLES FOR WOMEN STARTING OR RUNNING A BUSINESS

- Split participants into groups of 3-5 (as appropriate for event size)
- Give 5 minutes for brainstorming
- Have one person from each group present their list to the whole group

BRIEF GROUP DISCUSSION TO SUMMARIZE ACTIVITY:

- Did most groups come up with the same 10 items?
- What were the most unique/common ideas presented?

WATCH LESSON: PAVING THE WAY FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS (9 MINUTES)

Find the lesson at yali.state.gov/courses/women-girls and then select lesson 2, “Paving the Way for Women Entrepreneurs”.

GROUP DISCUSSION: (15 MINUTES)

Compare the examples brainstormed before watching the video to the content presented in the video.

- What was similar or different?
- What was surprising?

GROUP ACTIVITY (20 MINUTES)

AWARENESS SKIT:

- Give pairs or small groups 5 minutes to plan a skit, then perform it for the whole group. Encourage creativity.
- Have group members play the roles of a woman: trying to start a business making a pitch to a male regulator; or running a business and talking to a male customer or employee; or pitching an idea to a male investor. (Maximum 5 groups)
- Have participants provide brief feedback on how the skits were handled and if the actors could have said or done anything differently.

GROUP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

After the skits are completed, ask the attendees to discuss them and the video in the context of the questions below:

- Are people in your community aware of gender bias for female entrepreneurs?
- How do people in your community discuss this issue? How should they?
- Why is it important for the community to invest in women entrepreneurs?
- In what ways can you use these lessons to encourage more woman/girl entrepreneurship in your community?

BREAK, IF NEEDED (5 MINUTES)

GROUP ACTIVITY: ACTION PLANNING (20 MINUTES)

Break into different pairs or small groups to come up with an action plan for addressing one community situation that prevents women from starting businesses.

ACTION PLANS SHOULD CONSIDER:

- **TARGET AUDIENCE:** Who should be aware of this issue?
 - *Example: Women and girls in school, business leaders, husbands, fathers and brothers, etc.*
- **BEHAVIOR CHANGE:** What do you want this target audience to do?
 - *Example: Mentor other women, discuss issue at work, at universities, in public, etc.*
- **MESSAGING:** How do you approach them and what do you say or do?
 - *Example: Present benefits of expanding entrepreneurship opportunities for women, discuss starting a formal mentorship program, etc.*

WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

- Quickly reemphasize the core lessons learned and encourage the participants to stay in touch.
- Encourage attendees to take the online course quiz available at yali.state.gov/courses/women-girls to earn a certificate.
- Create a network amongst your group members to encourage each other to work together and hold each other accountable for carrying out the plan.
- Ask participants to sign up for the YALI Network at yali.state.gov.
- Plan to hold a follow-up #YALILearns session to help facilitate carrying out their action plans together.

WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

If possible, encourage attendees to learn more about #Africa4Her by visiting yali.state.gov/4her/ and pledging to support women entrepreneurs. You may also encourage them to sign up for the YALI Network if they are not already members. Don't forget to thank all your participants, and refer back to the #Africa4Her toolkit for things to do when your event is over.